

# UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the  
Southern District of Ohio

In the Matter of the Search of  
(Briefly describe the property to be searched  
or identify the person by name and address)

Case No. **1:21-MJ-00207**

Priority Mail parcel postal tracking number 9505 5158 6331 1061 3631 99,  
postmarked March 2, 2021, weighing 1 pound 14 ounces, addressed Erick  
Mendoza, 11664 National Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90064 Box #261 with a return  
address of Chris Smith, 328 Victory Ln, Franklin, OH 45005

## APPLICATION FOR A SEARCH WARRANT

I, a federal law enforcement officer or an attorney for the government, request a search warrant and state under penalty of perjury that I have reason to believe that on the following person or property (identify the person or describe the property to be searched and give its location):

Priority Mail parcel postal tracking number 9505 5158 6331 1061 3631 99

located in the Southern District of Ohio, there is now concealed (identify the person or describe the property to be seized):

Controlled Substances, materials and documents reflecting the distribution of controlled substances through the U.S. Mails, including money and/or monetary instruments paid for controlled substances

The basis for the search under Fed. R. Crim. P. 41(c) is (check one or more):

- ☒ evidence of a crime;
- ☒ contraband, fruits of crime, or other items illegally possessed;
- ☐ property designed for use, intended for use, or used in committing a crime;
- ☐ a person to be arrested or a person who is unlawfully restrained.

The search is related to a violation of: Title 21

Code Section	Offense Description
841 (a) (1), 843 (b) & 846	Conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance
	Possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance

The application is based on these facts:

See attached affidavit of U.S. Postal Inspector O'Neill

- ☒ Continued on the attached sheet.
- ☐ Delayed notice \_\_\_\_\_ days (give exact ending date if more than 30 days: \_\_\_\_\_) is requested under 18 U.S.C. § 3103a, the basis of which is set forth on the attached sheet.

*[Handwritten Signature]*

Applicant's signature

Karen L. O'Neill, U. S. Postal Inspector

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.  
via electronic means, specifically Facetime video.

Date: Mar 10, 2021

*[Handwritten Signature]*

Judge's signature



City and state: Cincinnati, Ohio

Honorable Stephanie K. Bowman  
United States Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF SEARCH WARRANT

I, KAREN O'NEILL, HAVING BEEN DULY SWORN, DEPOSE AND STATE: I am a United States Postal Inspector, having been so employed since March 2003.

1. I am presently assigned to the Cincinnati Field Office, Pittsburgh Division of the Postal Inspection Service with investigative responsibility for southwest Ohio, northern Kentucky, and southeast Indiana. Part of my investigative responsibility involves the use of the United States Mail in the transporting of narcotics and other dangerous controlled substances and financial proceeds relating thereto.

2. Your affiant has become aware that drug traffickers frequently use Express Mail, a business-oriented overnight service offered by the United States Postal Service, to transport narcotics and other dangerous controlled substances, and their proceeds or instrumentalities from the sale of the controlled substances. Your affiant has also become aware that drug traffickers frequently use Priority Mail with delivery confirmation, a 2-3 day service offered by the United States Postal Service. As a result of investigations and successful controlled substance prosecutions where the mail was used, your affiant has learned of certain characteristics indicative of other mail items previously identified as containing narcotics or other dangerous controlled substances, their proceeds or instrumentalities from the sale of the controlled substances. Some of these characteristics include, but are not necessarily limited to or used on every occasion, the mailer using different post offices on the same day to send parcels, false or non-existent return address, addressee is not known to receive mail at the listed delivery or sender address, the package is heavily taped, the package is mailed from a known drug source location, labeling information contains misspellings, unusual odors emanating from the package, and the listed address is located in an area of known or suspected drug activity.

3. U.S. Postal Inspectors are aware that the State of California is a source location for controlled substances that are regularly mailed to Ohio and the proceeds from the sales of controlled substances are frequently returned to California via the U.S. Mail. Based on this information, your affiant routinely reviews parcels and conducts postal database checks for inbound and outbound parcels that exhibit characteristics of parcels suspected of containing controlled substances and/or the proceeds from the sale of controlled substances.

4. On or about March 5, 2021, your affiant learned that Priority Mail parcel postal tracking number 9505 5158 6331 1061 3631 99 (SUBJECT PARCEL) addressed to Erick Mendoza, 11664 National Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90064 Box #261 with a return address of Chris Smith, 328 Victory Ln, Franklin, OH 45005 was mailed from Middletown, Ohio.

5. Your affiant did a check in CLEAR regarding the return address. CLEAR is a database that is used by law enforcement as a tool to identify person/business and address information. According to CLEAR, the name "Smith" is not associated with 328 Victory Ln, Franklin, OH 45005.

6. Your affiant did a check in Google regarding the addressee address. According to Google, the business "National Shipping Center" is located at 11664 National Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90064. This is a commercial mail receiving agency (CMRA) where post office boxes can be rented. Your affiant knows through her training and experience that sometimes an individual will rent a box or uses an address of a business to elude law enforcement and make a parcel appear to be legitimate instead of the use of their residence address.

7. Further investigation showed that "Erick Mendoza" has also received mail at 941 S Vermont Ave Suite 101, Los Angeles, CA 90006. The business "Mail Monster" is located at that address and is a CMRA like the aforementioned address.

8. The SUBJECT PARCEL had already processed through a postal facility in Cincinnati, Ohio and was enroute to Los Angeles, California. Your affiant contacted the office of delivery and requested the SUBJECT PARCEL be returned to her location for further investigation.

9. On or about March 8, 2021, your affiant received the SUBJECT PARCEL.

10. On or about March 9, 2021, your affiant contacted Cincinnati Police Department Specialist Mike Harper to arrange for a narcotic canine to check the SUBJECT PARCEL. Specialist Harper responded to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) Field office, Cincinnati, Ohio where the SUBJECT PARCEL was placed in a controlled area and presented to narcotic canine, "Cairo". "Cairo" alerted positively to the presence or odor of a controlled substance or their proceeds or instrumentalities upon the SUBJECT PARCEL. Your affiant knows that Specialist Harper and narcotic canine "Cairo" train regularly and are certified annually through the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy. Your affiant has presented countless parcels to Specialist Harper and canine "Cairo" which has resulted in successful seizures of a quantity of a



narcotic or other dangerous controlled substance and their proceeds or instrumentalities therefore your affiant considers them to be reliable. Attached herewith, and made part hereof by reference, is a photocopy of the narcotic canine handler's record of examination.

11. The SUBJECT PARCEL is further identified as follows: a U.S. Postal Service Priority Mail Large Flat Rate cardboard box 12" x 12" x 5 1/2" in size, weighing 1 pound 14 ounces, bearing tracking number 9505 5158 6331 1061 3631 99, postmarked March 2, 2021; see address information below:

**Sender:** Chris Smith  
328 Victory Ln  
Franklin, OH 45005

**Addressee:** Erick Mendoza  
11664 National Blvd  
Los Angeles, CA 90064  
Box #261

12. This information along with the positive alert of narcotic canine "Cairo" is indicative of a drug package or its proceeds.

13. Based on the information contained herein, your affiant believes that contained in the SUBJECT PARCEL is a quantity of a narcotic or other dangerous controlled substance, their proceeds or instrumentalities.

14. The SUBJECT PARCEL is being secured at the USFIS Field Office, Cincinnati, Ohio pending further investigation.

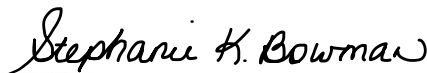
Therefore, a search warrant to open the SUBJECT PARCEL is requested.

Further, your affiant sayeth naught.



Karen O'Neill  
Postal Inspector

Subscribed and sworn to and before me this 10th day of March, 2021.  
**via electronic means, specifically Facetime video.**



Honorable Stephanie K. Bowman  
United States Magistrate Judge





United States Postal Inspection Service  
Pittsburgh Division

## OFFICER AFFIDAVIT

I, M Harper, am and have been employed by the Cincinnati Police Department since 2001. Among other duties, I am currently the assigned handler of narcotics detection canine "Cairo" which is trained and certified in the detection of the presence or odor of narcotics described as follows:

marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamine and heroin

On 3-9-21, at the request of Postal Inspector K. O'Neill, I responded to Cincinnati Postal Inspection Service office, where "Cairo" did alert to and indicate upon:

[describe item]

9505 5158 4331 1061 3431 99 Erick Mendez  
11664 Nicholas Blvd Los Angeles CA 90064 Box # 261  
return Chris Smith 328 Victory Ln Franklin  
OH 45605

Which, based upon my training and experience and that of "Cairo", indicates there is contained within or upon the above described item, the presence or odor of a narcotic or other controlled substance.

[Signature] 3-9-21  
Signature and Date)

[Signature] 3-9-21  
Signature and Date)